THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 26th March 1954.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Government Estate, Mount Road, at ten of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. SRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI) in the Chair.

French India—Point of information re. situation in.

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" ஸார், நேற்றையதினம் ப்ரெஞ்சு இந்தியா நிலைமையைப் பற்றி தோழர் ராமலிங்கம் ஒரு ஒத்தி வைப்புப் பிரேரணையை கொடுத்திருந்தார். அதன் விவரம் முடிவாகத் தெரியவில்லை. விவரம் தெரிந்தவுடன் மந்திரி அவர்கள் ஒரு அறிக்கையை சமர்ப்பிப்பதாகவும் அதைப் பற்றி விவாதிக்க அவகாசம் கொடுப்பதாகவும் தெரிவித்தார். அந்த அறிக்கை என்னவாயிற்று. அந்த விவாதம் எப்பொழுது நடைபெறும் என்பதை கேட்க விரும்புகிறேன்."

MR. SPEAKER :—" கேள்வி நேரம் ஆன பிறகு மந்திரி அவர்கள் ஒரு ஸ்டேட்மெண்டை கொடுப்பார்கள்.

" The Hon. the Finance Minister will make a statement on the subject after question hour."

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I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Closure of rice mills.

* 385 [a] Q.—SRI T. ANANTA PAI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state whether the Government are contemplating to get the rice mills in the State closed?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The answer is in the negative."

SRI T. ANANTA PAI :—" Do the Government propose to refuse the issue of fresh licences? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The answer is with reference to the closing of the rice mills. As regards granting licences for new mills, the matter is under the consideration of the Government."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" In view of the insistent demand from the public as evidenced by resolutions passed by political organizations and local bodies and in view of the importance of the problem in relation to unemployment, may I know why the Government are hesitant to consider this important question? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" As far as I am concerned, I am in full sympathy with the view put forward by the hon. Member and by various political organizations. But the problem is not so simple. This question is under examination by the Planning Commission and the All-India Village Industries Board. They have to take a decision. After that, we will follow it up."

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[a] Postponed from the list of questions for 25th March 1954.

MR. SPEAKER :—" As both these questions relate to the same subject, they may be taken up together."

Pest attack on betel vine in Salem district.

* 390 *Q.*—SRI S. RAMALINGAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received any memorandum from the Betel Vine Growers of Salem district complaining about pest attack on betel vine in Salem district ; and

(*b*) if so, the action taken to eradicate the pest?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (*a*) A memorandum from the betel vine growers of Velur, Namakkal of Salem district was received in November 1953.

" (*b*) Even as early as January 1953, on a representation made by Sri K. V. Ramaswami, M.L.A., the Government instructed the Director of Agriculture to assist the growers to combat the disease. A meeting of betel vine growers and landlords and local M.L.As. was convened by the local Agricultural Officer on 5th February 1953 at Velur in Namakkal taluk at which the cause of the betel vine disease and the control measures necessary to eradicate it were explained in detail. Similar demonstrations and propaganda for the control of the disease were held from time to time. The plant protection staff and the local Agricultural staff made frequent visits to the areas from where the disease was reported. On receipt of the representation in November 1953 that the disease has again appeared, the Government asked the Director of Agriculture to intensify propaganda and demonstration in Namakkal taluk and render all assistance to the growers. Besides, to help the poor growers, the Government ordered early in January 1954 that pesticides should be sold to betel vine growers in Namakkal taluk this season at 50 per cent of the cost price. The Government understand that this concession has been widely availed of. The wilting of betel vine is due to a fungus disease which is water and soil borne. It spreads easily from field to field due to irrigation through channel system. The symptoms become perceptible only if the root starts decaying. The growers are being asked by the Department to take timely precaution by the application of lime and spraying of Bordeaux mixture. The Government have instructed the Director of Agriculture to take all measures necessary to help the ryots in this respect."